Some thoughts on Point Foundation for the "vision' meeting on Sunday, 11 September

Over the last twenty-five years Point has been the "holding company" for an exciting mix of adventurous ideas, celebrations, communication, new thinking, and controversy. Whether it's been the Whole Earth Catalog, the Jamboree, New Games Festival, the "Polite" meetings, or Co-Evolution Quarterly, it was always changing and almost always out there on the edge exploring new ideas as they evolved. Point never seemed to have too specific a mission as it was constantly evolving.

Communication has always been an important function of Point. The creation of a forum for ideas (the magazines) access to tools of all sorts (WEC), ritualized non-verbal exchange (gaming), impromptu soap-boxing and song (Jamboree), on and on. Always there was fun. Parties to celebrate the birth, the passage, the death of it all. In fact, what we need right now is a bunch of boffers to work out some of the bottled up stuff that is clouding our vision and ability to work.

So what now? I think a good model is for Point Foundation to remain the foundation, with all of the business of publishing and active dissemination of ideas to be moved into a for-profit company with a major ownership share retained by Point Foundation. The balance of the shares can be sold to investors to re-capitalize the company. In addition, this share-holding model allows the staff to gain some sort of real ownership in the venture through employee ownership plans or direct investment. There are many creative ways to set up licensing and ownership agreements to protect Point's interest and income and also to allow the new company to have all the freedom it needs to succeed.

I believe that the magazine is viable and can be economically healthy as well. It needs its own focused vision and business plan and will have to run lean and mean while it builds its revenue stream. Lots of additional "idea" products are possible - books, and electronic stuff at the forefront. I'd be glad to help anyway I can.

Thanks for asking me to contribute.

David Katz